

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 15

INTRODUCED BY B. LAWSON, LENHART, MATTHEWS

A JOINT RESOLUTION OF THE SENATE AND THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF MONTANA REQUESTING AN INTERIM STUDY OF THE LAWS GOVERNING COMMUNITY COLLEGES; REQUESTING THE ASSISTANCE OF STATE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT AGENCIES; AND REQUIRING A REPORT ON THE STUDY'S FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE 58TH LEGISLATURE.

WHEREAS, the 21st century promises new challenges, new expectations, and new opportunities for community colleges; and

WHEREAS, Montana's community colleges labor under state laws that often conflict with and are duplicative of the laws for the K-12 school system and are unrelated to postsecondary institutions; and

WHEREAS, the Legislature is the branch of government authorized to provide clear, modern, effective, and flexible guidelines, in the form of laws, to pilot community college officials in carrying out the duties and responsibilities that citizens come to expect; and

WHEREAS, the Legislature recognizes its responsibility to provide clear statutory authority and direction to local community colleges; and

WHEREAS, the Legislature wishes to embark on a collaborative effort to revise, refine, and clarify state laws affecting community colleges.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE AND THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF MONTANA:

That the Legislative Council be requested to designate an appropriate interim committee, pursuant to section 5-5-217, MCA, or direct sufficient staff resources to:

(1) develop an understanding of the origins of state laws affecting community colleges and how the original intent of the laws may no longer be relevant or consistent;

(2) work with individuals who are knowledgeable about and experienced in the practical, legal, financial, educational, and related issues confronting community colleges; and

(3) develop a set of recommendations for Montana's community colleges that will guide these colleges into the 21st century and beyond.

1 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the committee or the staff may request the assistance of the
2 community colleges, the Commissioner of Higher Education, the various agencies of state government,
3 and local governments in the conduct of the study.

4 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that, if the study is assigned to staff, any findings or conclusions be
5 presented to and reviewed by an appropriate committee designated by the Legislative Council.

6 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that all aspects of the study, including presentation and review
7 requirements, be concluded prior to September 15, 2002.

8 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the final results of the study, including any findings, conclusions,
9 comments, or recommendations of the appropriate committee, be reported to the 58th Legislature.

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